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SEE PAGE 27



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**AND: UPMARKET KEBABS? DONER SHACK REVIEW - P20&21**

**GARETH'S LEGACY**



**ALWAYS IN OUR HEARTS:** Gareth Dunn with his mum April Dunn. Picture: Cancer Research UK. Photograph by Richard Walker / www.imagenorth.net

Family to continue son's £100,000 fundraising drive in his memory

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THE HEARTBROKEN mum of a 27-year-old man who raised £100,000 for a cancer charity before the disease claimed his life has vowed to continue fundraising in his name.

April Dunn, of Cookridge, said she

will not stop until a cure is found for the sarcoma cancer that killed her son Gareth.

She spoke after a launch night was held for the second annual 10k Cookridge Community Run and family fundraising runs to be held in north Leeds in May 2020.

**Special Report: See Pages 6 & 7.**



**CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF TOUCHING HEARTS AND CHANGING LIVES**



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# Mum: Gareth's legacy will help others

27-year-old raised £100k for charity before his death

## MEMORIAL

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THE MUM of a Leeds man who raised £100,000 for a cancer charity before his death aged just 27 has spoken of her family's determination to ensure his legacy helps others battling the disease.

April Dunn praised the north Leeds community's support after a launch event this week for the second annual fundraising runs to be held next May in her son Gareth's memory.

Hundreds of people took part in the inaugural 10k Cookridge Community Run and family fundraising run in north Leeds, in May.

Gareth Dunn, of Cookridge, was suffering from terminal cancer when he completed the London Marathon with a prosthetic running blade in May 2018.

The marathon was one of the fundraising challenges Mr Dunn determined to conquer to raise £100,000 for Cancer Research UK, and in particular research into synovial sarcoma.

He achieved his fundraising goal before losing his fight for life last October.

Speaking to the YEP, his mum Mrs Dunn, said: "Losing your son is the worst thing that can happen to a mum, dad and a family. He had so much to give the world and he absolutely loved life. He wanted to do so much with his life and didn't get that chance."

"He loved his sports, he loved his friends and he absolutely adored travelling."

"He was brave and he was angry - he didn't want to die. He was kind and enthusiastic and had such a zest for life."

"We all miss him dreadfully and life is not the same and never will be the same."

"Hopefully the fundraising to research a cure for sarcoma will help other people live life to the full. We will continue to fundraise in his name until a cure is found."

Mrs Dunn said the support in north Leeds for the fundraising runs is "amazing".

Next year's runs will be supported and sponsored by Bannatyne Health Club at Cookridge Hall. A launch night was held at the health club

## MEMORIAL RUN

THE MAY 2020 10k run will start and finish at the Scout Hut on Pinfold Lane and the route will again include Golden Acre Park.

Last year, 350 people ran the 10k and 100 people took part in the family run to raise a total of £7,500, which was shared between Cancer Research UK and OPAL (Older People's Action in the Locality.) Next year, there will be 400 places in the 10k and 100 places for a one-mile family fun run.

Cash raised at the 2020 runs will be shared between Cancer Research UK, the physiotherapy department at St James's Hospital in Leeds and OPAL. Details of the races can be found at [www.cookridgecommunityruns.co.uk](http://www.cookridgecommunityruns.co.uk)

on Pinfold Lane, Cookridge, on Wednesday for the second annual runs, which are to be held on Sunday May 17 2020.

Mr Dunn's friend David Smart is helping organise the runs along with Abbey Runners and plans to stage them every year in Mr Dunn's memory.

Mr Smart said: "Last year's event was so well supported by the community and local businesses who sponsored it."

"This was the legacy that Gareth wanted to leave behind, that we continue his work fundraising help try find a cure for sarcoma. He would have loved the fact that this is happening."

"We are hoping that next year's event will be bigger and better and raise even more money." Mr Dunn's JustGiving page has so far registered more than £132,000 raised.

Mr Dunn set up an online blog - called Chemotionally Unstable - when he was given his terminal diagnosis.

In his blog posts, he discussed all aspects of living with incurable cancer from treatment and mental well-being to fitness. His brother Rhys Dunn, 29, has taken over responsibility for updating the blog. And Mr Dunn told his story in his own words in a poignant 2017 video, filmed by Cancer Research.

- Visit [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/chemotionally-unstable](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/chemotionally-unstable) to donate.

**LEGACY:** April Dunn pictured with son Gareth in July 2017. Picture: Cancer Research UK Photograph by Richard Walker / [www.imagenorth.net](http://www.imagenorth.net)



## The timing of cancer diagnosis was so cruel

GARETH DUNN was about to start the demanding army officer training course at Sandhurst when he was diagnosed with cancer in his foot and had to have his right leg amputated below the knee.

Mr Dunn told the YEP in November 2017: "The timing was incredibly cruel. I had worked hard to get my place at Sandhurst and had planned my life as an army officer in the Paras, but just as I was about to realise my dream, suddenly it was snatched away from me."

Despite the massive blow, talented sportsman Mr Dunn, pictured above, was determined to fight back and focused on joining the GB Paralympic squad.

He was back in the gym two weeks after his operation and

three months after surgery, he was fitted with a prosthetic running blade.

He went on to successfully apply to train with the cycling, canoeing and athletics squad of the GB Paralympic team.

He also embarked upon a new career challenge in international affairs with the aim of joining the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. But just as it seemed he had his life back on track he was dealt the most cruel of blows.

A scan showed a massive tumour in his left lung and 14 smaller ones in his right lung.

After Mr Dunn was diagnosed with terminal cancer, he set himself a series of fundraising challenges and achieved his target of raising £100,000.

